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UNH Student To Run Across The State For Make-A-Wish

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DURHAM, N.H. - John Lacroix only started running four years ago but he has been quick to make up for lost time. An ultramarathoner and full-time student at the University of New Hampshire, Lacroix is getting ready to run across the state to help raise money for New Hampshire's Make-A-Wish Foundation. And he's taking his best friend-and anyone else who wants to come along-with him.

The run is set for Oct. 19, starting in Chesterfield and ending 124 miles later at Odiorne State Park in Rye. Lacroix, of Newmarket, decided running would be a great way to experience the beauty of the Granite State "up close and personal."

"It was something I'd always thought about doing," the UNH sophomore said. "So, I decided to see if anyone else wanted to come along."

A Web posting drew the attention of his friend Nathan Sanel, also an ultramarathoner and the owner of National PowerSports Distributors in Pembroke. Every year, Sanel plans a run to benefit a different charity. The pair decided to team up this year for the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

"Every kid has dreams. We have dreams; we have a dream to run across the state and started thinking about who we could help," Lacroix says. "Make-A-Wish came to mind."

Previously, Lacroix collected more than \$20,000 for the American Diabetes Association Research Fund through a documentary on hiking New Hampshire's 4,000-foot peaks. To raise money for Make-A-Wish, Sanel is raffling off a 2007 Honda VT600VLX.

The farthest Lacroix has ever run is 104 miles.

"This will be like doing an ultramarathon (for him, 100 miles) and then adding a marathon at the end," he says.

The pair will run around the clock, beginning at six a.m. the Route 9 bridge in Chesterfield, through Keene, Sullivan, Hillsborough, Henniker, Hopkinton, and Concord where they will pick up Route 4 to Durham. From there they will run through Newington, Portsmouth and New Castle before ending up at the Seacoast Science Center in Rye.

Lacroix expects it will take between 30 and 36 hours. He's hoping that when they reach UNH, members of the university community will join them to run the last leg into Rye.

"We want to get everyone from UNH to join us," says Lacroix, an outdoor education major. "If we can run for 124 hours around the click, hopefully they'll think nothing of running the few miles with us."

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